

Annapolis City Dock Master Plan

A Framework to Guide Improvements & Redevelopment



December 2012

A Letter to the Citizens of Annapolis

In 2010, Mayor Josh Cohen directed that a citizens' committee be formed to advise the City on rejuvenating City Dock – the City Dock Advisory Committee (CDAC). The Mayor charged us with three objectives: to establish guiding principles for the use and redevelopment of City Dock, to develop a master plan based on those principles, and to encourage and coordinate public participation throughout the planning process. CDAC has now completed our tasks and we are pleased to deliver this master plan report. We published our first report, Visions and Principles, Phase One Report, in July 2011. It has been an honor for us to serve the City in preparing this Plan, which we hope will help bring economic revitalization to City Dock; the City's Beautiful Historic Seaport.

As part of our work we hosted two citizen work sessions at the Old Recreation Center at City Dock. At the first, citizens reviewed alternative approaches to addressing broad concerns, such as open space, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, and access to the water, and evaluated the relative strengths and weakness of different ideas. At the second workshop, we asked citizens to evaluate and deliberate on a preliminary master plan. We also held seven committee meetings between May and November 2012 as we prepared this Master Plan; each was open to the public and the input we received at these meetings helped shape this document.

We embrace the outcome of our efforts yet we note that we are not unanimous in our support of two elements of the Plan. The first concerns the intersection of Compromise, Main, and Randall. While one-half of our committee supports the Plan's call to convert Memorial Circle to a "T" intersection, the other half has reservations about any such change and would generally prefer modifications, or no changes at all, to the current circle. The CDAC does agree that the intersection needs further evaluation to assess traffic operational and aesthetic concerns because it of its central role, for better or for worse, in shaping the pedestrian experience and the opportunities for public space. The second element is parking along Dock Street. While we are less divided on this question, we recognize that reducing the number of parking spaces along Dock Street will require the City to commit to effective parking management strategies to ensure that short-term customer parking remains available even while the total number of spaces on Dock Street is reduced. We encourage the City to balance the planned open space improvements with thoughtful implementation of parking management and involve the business owners on Dock and Market Streets.

A considerable amount of work has been undertaken and more than anything, it has revealed to us the great complexities that attend any effort to prepare a plan for such a unique and significant part of our City. The consensus of CDAC is that this Master Plan is a guide to public and private decision-making. We encourage the City to work diligently in implementing it and to seek, on an ongoing basis, the input of all members of the community. We know that any plan will take years to implement, that options will be tried and tested, learning will take place and new responses will be adopted. We are encouraged that the unanimously supported principles we established in 2011 are not only achievable with this Plan; they are its very foundation.

Much work still lies ahead now that we have completed our assignment. This Plan will be reviewed by the Planning Commission, which is officially charged with making plans that guide development and redevelopment in Annapolis. The Historic Preservation Commission and other appointed or voluntary associations and commissioners both in and outside of City government will review and comment on this Plan. To those groups we ask first and foremost that you recognize, as we have, that there is a broad set of community interests, values, and concerns, many of which are competing. These varying concerns and interests must be held in balance and respected.

We understand that a Master Plan is a document that provides direction and guidance; it is not a detailed design to be quibbled over or a static design that can never be adjusted. The illustrated plan in this report is a hopeful target; a destination point to be arrived at. In order to get there, we ask all concerned to remember that each decision made at City Dock, whether

it concerns a private request for a zoning change or a public need for flood protection, has the opportunity to either detract from or contribute to this Plan. We respectfully and earnestly ask the Mayor and City Council to weigh such decisions against this Master Plan, which at its core reflects the public's interest and aspirations for the future of City Dock.

~the Members of the City Dock Advisory Committee

*Chairman Kurt Schmoke
Vice-Chairman Gene Godley
Adriana Apolito-Bevis
Karen Theimer Brown,
Joe Budge
Anthony Clarke
Dick D'Amato
Cathy Durkan
Debbie Gosselin*

*Matt Grubbs
John Guild
Kitty Higgins
Catharine Incaprera
Ann Jensen
Gary Jobson
Pearse O'Doherty
Rhonda Pindell-Charles
Orlando Ridout V*

*Joseph Rubino
Chris Schein
Gary Schwerzler
NT Sharps
Peggy Summers
Robert Waldman
Chance Walgran
Carol Nethen West*

Acknowledgment Page

The City Dock Master Plan

This Plan is a response to the place of City Dock, as it is. It does not seek to impose ideas but instead helps reveal the potential and possibility held in the current condition, the beautiful historic Annapolis seaport. The Plan offers responses to the needs of today and tomorrow but is grounded in a profound respect for the historical context of Annapolis.

The Master Plan is illustrated here. It is not meant to be static in its design. It is instead a guide to decision-making for the next 20 years. The Master Plan should guide infrastructure improvements, redevelopment plans, and zoning decisions. Since the Plan was prepared with a great deal of citizen involvement, it also stands as an invitation to the citizens of Annapolis to work toward realizing the new possibilities that can be found at City Dock.

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I. Annapolis City Dock

In as much as any place can, City Dock holds within its frame a long-running conversation about community that has much to offer. The radial streets of the 1695 Annapolis city plan lead to a beautiful place at the water's edge. It is a place of everyday commerce and special civic gatherings, a place of arrival and departure, a place for chance encounters. As the Alex Haley Memorial reminds us, it is also a place for honoring the triumph of the human spirit.

Both individual and collective efforts have for centuries sculpted and re-sculpted City Dock. In the 18th and 19th century, the City formalized, and filled the inlet using all manner of fill—oyster shells, lumber, rock, and dredge. In the process the City created new land and Annapolitans built maritime buildings and commercial enterprises. Buildings, businesses, and infrastructure on City Dock were replaced again and again in a process of continual change.

The Market House took form at City Dock in the early part of the City's history and by the late 19th century the public space around Market House had achieved a formal structure. It was improved into a park with trees and a traffic circle between Green Street and Middleton's Tavern. By the mid 20th century use of the space within the circle was privatized and eventually it gave way to the circulation demands of the automobile. Compromise Street was extended to Spa Creek by this time and thus City Dock was connected to Eastport via road.



By the middle of the 20th century, many of the buildings on the north side of City Dock had been replaced with the parking lots that are still there today and the building pattern along Compromise Street had begun to take the form we see now. City Dock is not what it was centuries ago but its history is recognizable in today's patterns, vistas, buildings, and commercial activities.

City Dock has much history still to come and its continual change will speak to future Annapolitans of today's values and today's responses to changing needs and conditions. A central and integral objective of this Plan is the rejuvenation and sustained economic revitalization of City Dock. The Plan envisions critically important investments such as wider sidewalks, public spaces, flood protection, and public arts programming that reinforces the Annapolis Beautiful Historic Seaport brand, and thoughtful management of parking supplies that increase the availability of customer parking. These are among the public space investments that have helped revitalize downtown waterfront district throughout the world.

II. Guiding Principles Applied

In 2010, Mayor Josh Cohen directed the Planning Department to form a citizens' committee to advise the City on rejuvenating City Dock. Twenty-five members reflecting varying interests were appointed and the City Dock Advisory Committee (CDAC) began its work. The Mayor charged the CDAC with establishing guiding principles for the use and redevelopment of City Dock, developing a master plan based on those principles, and encouraging and coordinating public participation throughout the planning process. CDAC published its first report, City Dock Advisory Committee: *Visions and Guiding Principles, Phase One Report*, in July 2011 after outreach to the Annapolis community. The principles as adopted by CDAC are listed in the Appendix to this report.

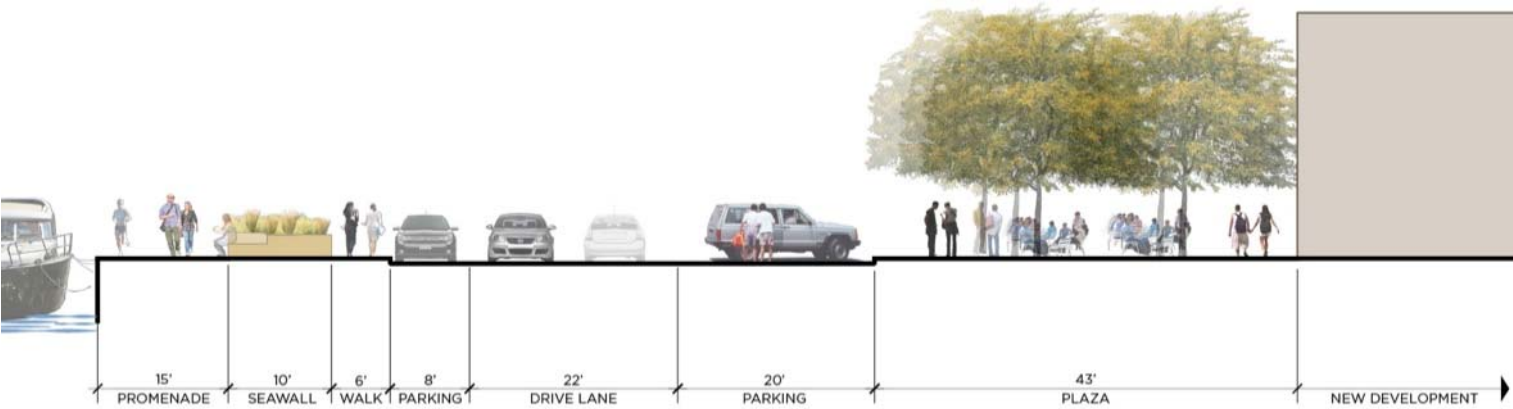
CDAC's guiding principles are the foundation for this Master Plan and the presentation, which follows, is organized around these principles. Each of the next sections leads with a summary statement of a guiding principle: (1) Gradual Improvement with Emphasis on Historic Layout, Scale, Vistas, (2) High Quality Walkable Public Open Spaces, (3) Toward Balance in Transportation on City Dock, (4) Greening and Sustainability, and (5) Public Art: Nurturing the Uniqueness of Place.



A. Gradual Improvement with Emphasis on Historic Layout, Scale, Vistas

Gradual Improvements and Emphasis on Context

As an example of how a master plan works with gradual improvement and emphasis on context, consider the sidewalk in front of the businesses on City Dock. It is too narrow to handle regular pedestrian traffic and it is an obstacle to the flow of pedestrians especially along the 100 block of Dock Street. Widening the sidewalk while holding its new edge parallel to the bulkhead rather than to the buildings has the effect of creating an increasingly wider pedestrian zone along the building frontage as the sidewalk extends eastward to Craig Street. As sidewalks approach 30 or more feet in width they can become places for outdoor dining, shade, street furniture, bicycle parking, and more, all of which increases social and economic vitality. This public improvement therefore creates a new center of activity that draws people out to Dock Street. With the enlargement of the existing sidewalk to create a larger pedestrian zone in front of the buildings, the Plan also effectively defines the edge of Dock Street, which can then be seen as a well-defined commercial street rather than as drive aisle through a parking lot. Improvements such as above should be made gradually in time so that the City can assess how they are working before making the next improvement.



There are other such instances, such as at Market House, where modest changes find their genesis in an historic framework. On the south end of Market House (facing Green Street), the Plan seeks to reclaim space for public use. Perhaps nowhere else in Annapolis does the potential exist for an outdoor room so close to the water and yet so nicely framed by the City's historic architecture. In reclaiming this space for people, the Plan reclaims the historic urban fabric of City Dock, rededicating space that had historically been available for public use. This potential is particularly achievable, if the opportunity to convert Memorial Circle to a more space-efficient T intersection is taken, as discussed later in the Plan.



Scale and Vistas

The City Plan for Annapolis (1695) is in the Grand Manner or Baroque style. Not unlike plans for Paris, Rome, and Washington D.C., the Annapolis City Plan makes grand gestures with radiating streets and open vistas. These enduring elements of civic beauty are not accidents of topography or the unintended result of private decision-making about building or development. These features of City Dock are by design; they are intentional.

The long view enjoyed from along Main Street out to the Chesapeake Bay is intentional and nothing in the Master Plan impedes or distracts from this view.



Also critical is the potential for sweeping views from nearer to the foot of Main Street out over City Dock to the Annapolis Harbor. While the great expanse of this view has not yet been realized because of buildings and other structures, its potential is inherent in the City's historic plan. In fact, when the 1695 Plan was laid out there were no structures (not even land) where the former Fawcett's building

now stands. The Plan therefore restores the viewshed envisioned centuries ago. As illustrated on this page, the Plan provides opportunities for new buildings while securing this view in perpetuity. The Plan calls for removing the old Fawcett's Building from the viewshed; allowing Annapolis to seize the opportunity to realize this potential that is held on City Dock. There are other views, to and from the water, that define the context of City Dock and great care and discernment will need to be brought to bear in the future as development projects are both proposed and reviewed.



On City Dock, no private development or public use, space, square, building, or art whether existing or to be constructed can be viewed in isolation. It must be considered within its historic and physical context. This includes parking. The allocation of so much public land to the parking of private vehicles severely undervalues City Dock and historic Annapolis.

Scale and New Buildings

The Plan envisions that redevelopment will occur on City Dock. Three opportunity sites are shown on the exhibit below. Each project has the ability to contribute to the context and setting of City Dock and indeed each has the potential to distract from it as well. The approximate footprint of the buildings are set outside of the principal viewsheds to and from the water. However, it will be imperative that viewshed analyses be undertaken during the plan-review process for any new development or major redevelopment projects on City Dock.

Apart from views, other important considerations should be made. For example, for the proposed redevelopment projects along Dock Street, strong building massing of three- to five-story heights facing the water will help activate and frame the open spaces. Such larger buildings also have the potential to distract from the architectural patterns established on Prince George Street. This is especially the case on that section of Prince George Street between Craig Street and Randall Street. New building forms facing Prince George Street at this location will need to fit harmoniously with a historic residential character.

On the former Fawcett's site, the Plan's principal objectives include setting new buildings back from the water's edge by 45 to 55 feet. This allows space for the promenade and ample room for flood mitigation infrastructure while leaving space for outdoor use by the users of the building in ways that will energize and enliven this side of City Dock. It is recommended that the building have a far smaller setback along Compromise Street; 15 to 20 feet would be about enough to secure the proposed sidewalk width needed in this area. The building would likely be developed in part on property presently owned by the City (the "Fleet" parking lot, located at the intersection of Newman and Compromise Streets.). The massing of building(s) on the former Fawcett site should provide a beautiful backdrop to the proposed public space on the Donner Lot and help frame, in the distance, the proposed market square. Two to three stories are recommended.



B. High Quality Pedestrian-Oriented and Walkable Open Space

Parks and Open Spaces

Much of City Dock is public, but, with few isolated exceptions, it is not yet a public space. The Plan makes a firm commitment to improve conditions for people by creating new spaces and an improved pedestrian environment, not through bold gestures, but through small deliberate changes that help tie City Dock together. This is a central organizing principle of this Plan.

The Plan locates public recreational spaces at locations that seem obvious. The plan calls for an improved Susan Campbell Park where the main pedestrian routes terminate at the furthest reach of the land. It calls for a new public space at the Donner Lot, which lies adjacent to the water and thereby secures the view to and from the water. The Plan calls for a new park at the naturally low-lying area where Newman Street reaches the water. This park would provide access to the water and consistent with so much public input, this park would effectively extend play space for the City’s children from the playground at Newman and Compromise down to the water. The Plan also calls for a new civic space at Market House and public/private spaces—outdoor dining, for example, adjacent to what could become new buildings in the future.



Market Square

A new central market square is proposed at Market House. The space is already framed by historic buildings and activated by retail and restaurants. It affords spectacular views eastward down Ego Alley. This space could provide outdoor seating for Market House vendors and the customers of other businesses. It should secure space for the Compass Rose, the Memorial Circle flag, and shade trees. The space would be enlivened with a continual flow of pedestrians along its perimeter as people walk from Main Street out to City Dock and back. This market square visually extends over Randall Street to the water's edge at the head of Ego Alley. As shown below the consistency in surface materials can create the sense of one larger place.

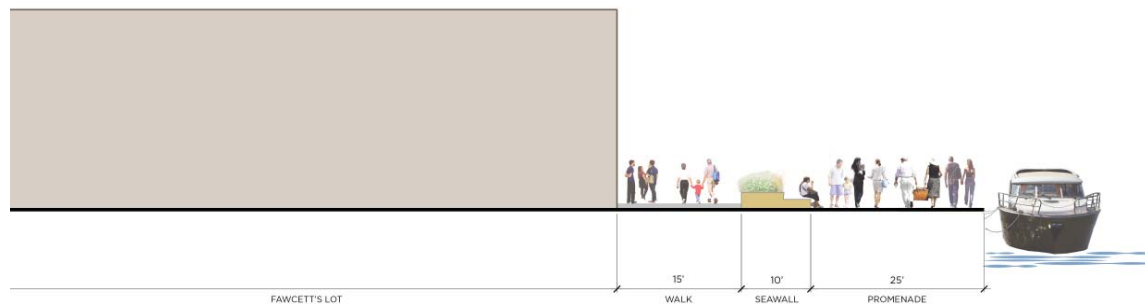
Presently Market House and Hopkins Plaza together comprise 16,000 square feet. As proposed in this Plan, the total space would approximate 22,800 square feet. The square in front of market house could extend 150 feet from the edge of Market House toward Main Street and 100 feet across from Market Place to Randall Street. Businesses with sidewalk frontage could extend out into Market Space or at least onto the proposed wider sidewalks which would extend 24 to 30 feet from the building's edge. Beginning at the approaches from all directions, the intersection would become a slow moving environment through the use of textured pavement and other means to calm traffic.



A Promenade

The most prominent walkable public space would be the promenade. The Plan calls for it to extend from Newman Street around Ego Alley out to Susan Campbell Park. The promenade would retain its 15-foot width between Randall Street and the Water Taxi dockage. Beyond that point it would widen as it approaches the bulkhead at the end of City. It would provide views of the water uninterrupted by parked cars and would be wide enough to be multi-functional, while providing the space needs for docking activities. It could accommodate Boat Show exhibitor space, public art installations, seasonal shade structures and other objects and events.

On the south side of City Dock, from the Donner Lot to Newman Street, the promenade could range from 15 to 30 feet. The cross section below shows a promenade of 25 feet in width.



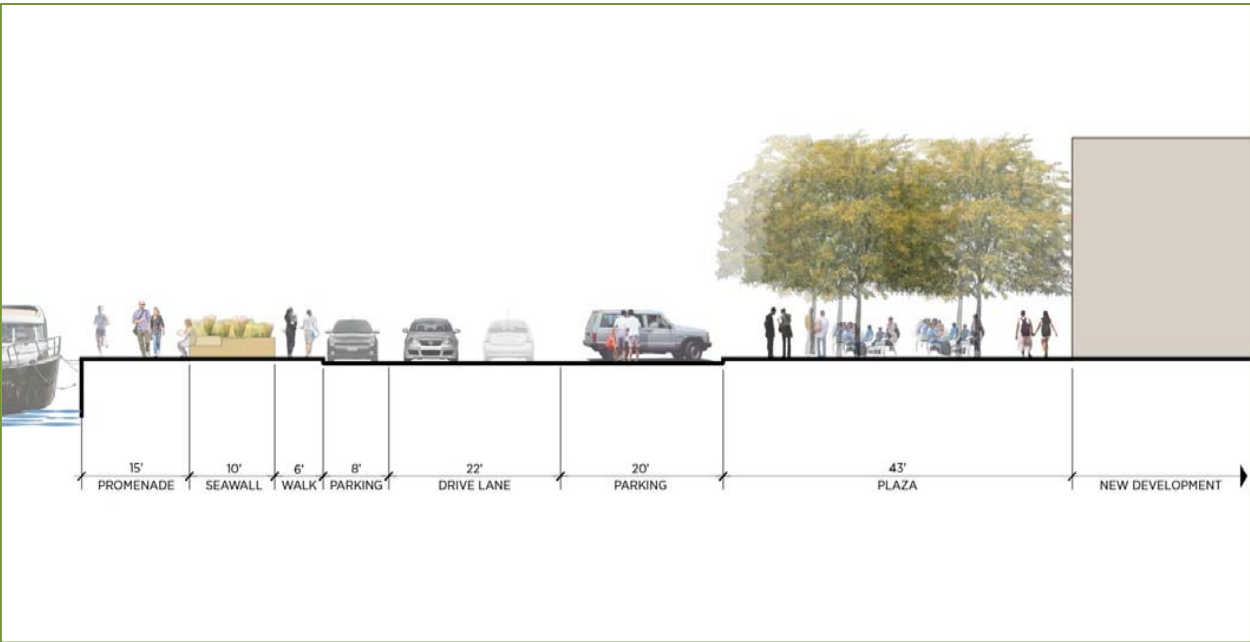
It is the intention of this Plan that in the future the promenade could extend from Newman Street along the bulkhead past the current Fleet Reserve Club and the Marriott Hotel to the Annapolis Yacht Basin before reconnecting to Compromise Street. As described elsewhere in this report, prior to any development or change of use on these properties, the Master Plan should be amended to incorporate and/or extend the principal public elements of this Plan. One day the promenade could connect to the Naval Academy and provide a continuous walkway along the bulkhead of the Severn River to the Naval Academy Bridge.



C. Toward Balance in Transportation

Accommodating the movement and parking of cars at City Dock came at the expense of the pedestrian environment. Nearly half of the City Dock study area is covered in streets or parking lots. On City Dock, pedestrian spaces, and public space more generally, are confined to areas not required by cars. This factor, more than any other, has disconnected the City and its residents from the waterfront. When people speak of access to the water they speak of the ability to be near it, to walk along it, to enjoy the wind and views. It is telling that the most active place on City Dock is the bulkhead closest to Randall and near the Alex Haley sculpture where one can feed the ducks and sit close to the water. This Plan provides for a transition to a future in which the design of public spaces, the planning for pedestrian movements, and the planning for the circulation and parking of cars are considered together.

A simple example of the transition the Plan is making in favor of integrated and balanced city planning is Dock Street. As mentioned previously, under this Plan it would become a well-defined public street much like any business street in Annapolis with ample short-term parking and sidewalks. The extra pavement along the water’s edge now devoted to parking would be re-purposed for essential public goods such as flood protection and for wider sidewalks along the storefronts. A proposed cross-section of Dock Street facing the market house is shown here.



Transition of an Intersection at the Heart of City Dock

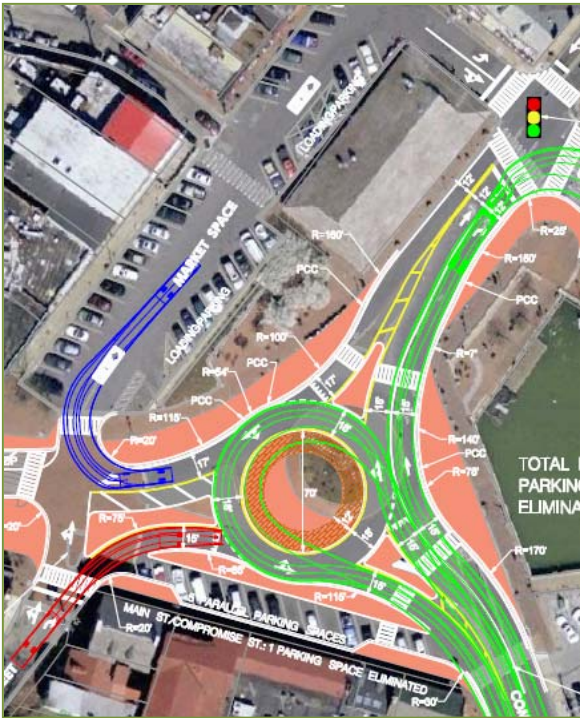
The most prominent example of transition toward balance can be found in the Plan's approach to the intersection of Compromise, Main, and Randall. While the City Dock Advisory Committee could not find consensus on how best to address this intersection, the Plan does recognize that converting Memorial Circle to a "T" intersection is an opportunity to improve the pedestrian experience and create useable public spaces. Therefore the Plan features a "T" intersection with Randall Street intersecting Compromise and Main at a right angle, while recognizing that more community discussion will need to be devoted to this question. This adjustment to the physical layout of City Dock would reduce weekend traffic delays and back-ups during the spring and summer months when traffic is heaviest and have other traffic flow benefits. More detail regarding how the "T" intersection operates is provided in Section F. Improved traffic operations are not the only benefit of a new intersection; the main public benefit is the balance it brings to the flow of cars and pedestrians year-round while allowing useable public space at Market House and the Alex Haley Memorial.

A "T" intersection assists pedestrians in three ways. First, it allows multiple street crossings aligned with the routes pedestrians desire to take. Pedestrians would no longer be forced into circuitous movements around the intersection or unsafe crossings through the roundabout. This distributes pedestrian loadings and reduces the crowding at the Randall/Dock Street intersection. Second, the "T" allows the intersection to be signalized, providing "green time" exclusively for pedestrians while all traffic is stopped. Context-sensitive traffic signal poles would be used and the signals would be synchronized to allow greater time for pedestrians when most needed, and less time when not. Third, the "T" configuration allows lane widths and turning radii to be smaller, which reduces walking distances across the street and especially benefits the elderly, disabled, and persons with small children.



As mentioned earlier, CDAC has not found consensus on the how best to address the intersection. Other options were designed and studied, including a modification to the current roundabout. If the City adopted a Modified Circle option (shown on this page), the lanes entering and within the circle would be narrowed and the circle would be shifted northward on Main Street. This would free up space that could be added to Hopkins Plaza and along the water (shown in orange in the large exhibit below). Traffic engineering evaluations of this option revealed it offered no improvements to existing traffic operations, largely because a roundabout in an urban context like City Dock cannot account for the conflicting movements of pedestrians and vehicles and the variety of offsetting intersection approaches. As cars yield to pedestrians, traffic inevitably backs up into the circle. Further, access to the parking along the buildings at the intersection would have to be limited to right-hand turns from Green Street.

The other option considered was a traditional traffic circle similar to Church Circle and State Circle. This option had the advantage of enclosing a large amount of public open space but was judged impractical because pedestrians would have to cross multiple lanes of traffic to enter the encircled public space. The option of doing nothing is also an option that the City may wish to take. The drawbacks of making no changes to the intersection are that there can be no gains in public space or improvements to the pedestrian environment. New pedestrian crossings cannot be introduced under the currently configured circle without risking pedestrian safety.



Modified Circle

In sum, because the main transition envisioned by the community is one toward balance and away from car dominance, the intersection of Compromise, Main, and Randall demands much attention. Getting to a balance does require physical changes to the intersection. The most frequently cited concern about the “T” intersection is that it might create new or increased traffic congestion. The City’s consulting engineer Sabra Wang Associates, Inc. evaluated this and determined that a “T” intersection improves overall traffic conditions as discussed previously. The other concern raised about the “T” intersection speaks to aesthetics, viewsheds, and historic context. These too are important concerns to embrace and, in so doing, one must recall how the current context in which a raised traffic island in the center of the intersection, planted with 14-foot tall trees, impedes views to and from the water. The current circle is a “within living memory” feature of City Dock.

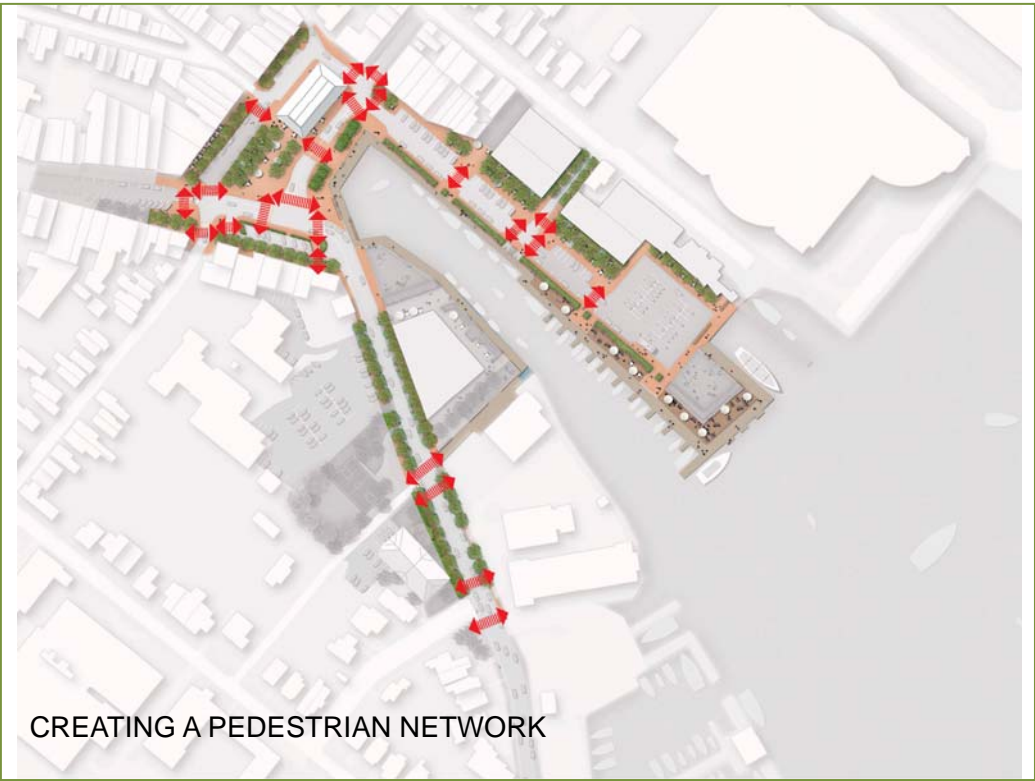


Variations on the options studied for the Compromise/Main/Randall intersection.

Pedestrian-ization

The Plan improves the pedestrian environment throughout the study area. As shown below, crosswalks are located along the lines that link pedestrians from downtown to the water. No longer should pedestrians be hemmed in by bollards and chains and directed to just one location for crossing Randall Street. The proposed signalized intersections at Compromise/Main and Randall Streets and at Dock and Randall Streets would referee the flow of pedestrians and vehicles. In all, three new crossings near the intersection of Randall and Main Streets are added. A prominent crosswalk in front of the Market House is provided and it connects the component elements of the Alex Haley Memorial together—the Compass Rose on the Market House side and the sculpture situated adjacent to the water.

The Plan would widen sidewalks in front of all existing businesses on Dock Street, Market Space, and the first block of Main Street. It also allows the sidewalk to be widened at Market House along Randall Street. The widening of these sidewalks would allow restaurants to have café seating while also allowing pedestrians to move more freely past tables.



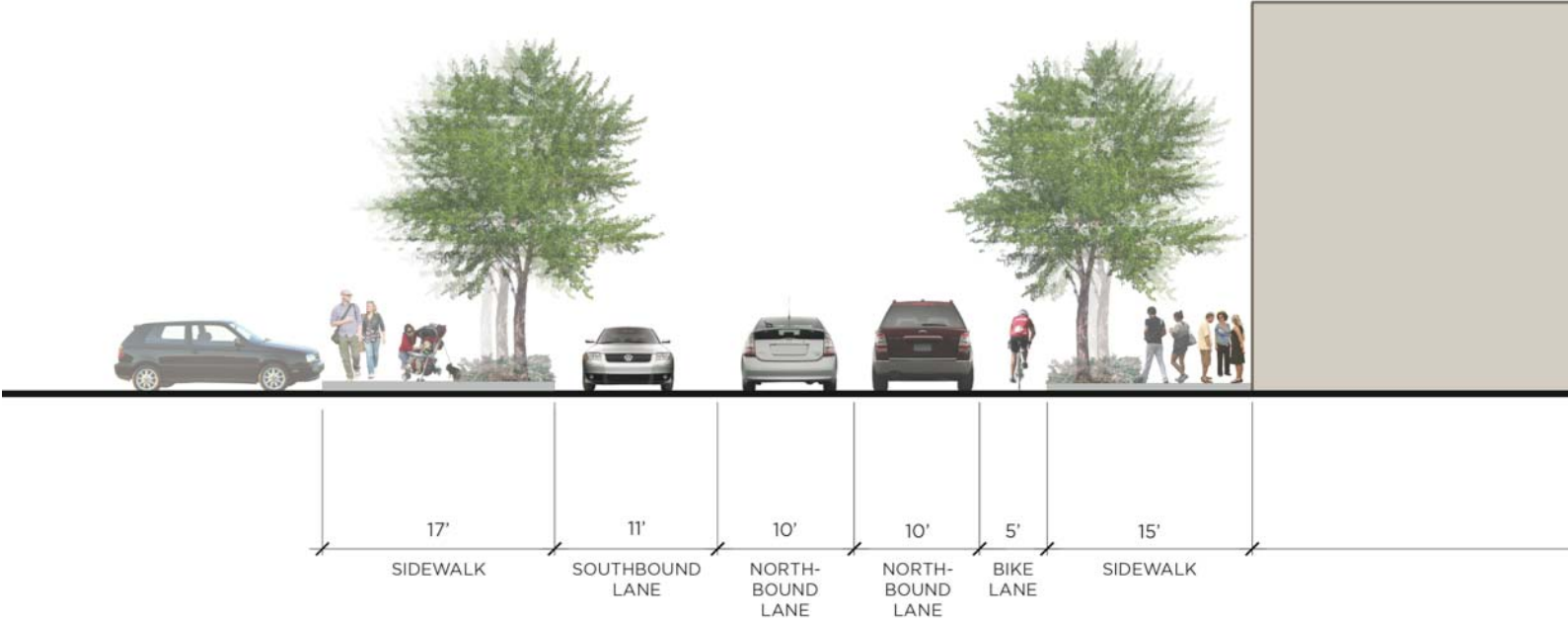
Compromise Street

The Plan’s treatment of Compromise Street is especially important. Currently Compromise can be a rather high speedway into City Dock. At about 36 feet wide, it can also be difficult to cross, especially for families with small children at Newman Street near the playground. Compromise Street is an important link for visitors walking between the downtown and the Marriott Hotel. Therefore, at both the Newman and St. Mary’s Street intersections on Compromise Street, prominent crosswalks and other traffic calming measures should be used to calm traffic speeds and reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians if possible. The intersection of St. Mary’s Street should define the point of entry or gateway into the City Dock area. The City should consider extending a unifying pavement treatment out to St. Mary’s Street. The width of Compromise at this location allows for the loading and unloading of bus passengers at the hotel. This feature should not be negatively impacted by these plans to improve Compromise Street.

The proposed street section along Compromise Street looking toward downtown near the former Fawcett’s property is provided here. Note the Plan calls for retaining two lanes of automobile traffic in the northbound direction and one lane in the southbound (toward the Spa Creek Bridge) direction. The Plan also calls for a designated bike lane northbound leading into City Dock. Bikes and cars would share the lane in the southbound direction, leading out of downtown.

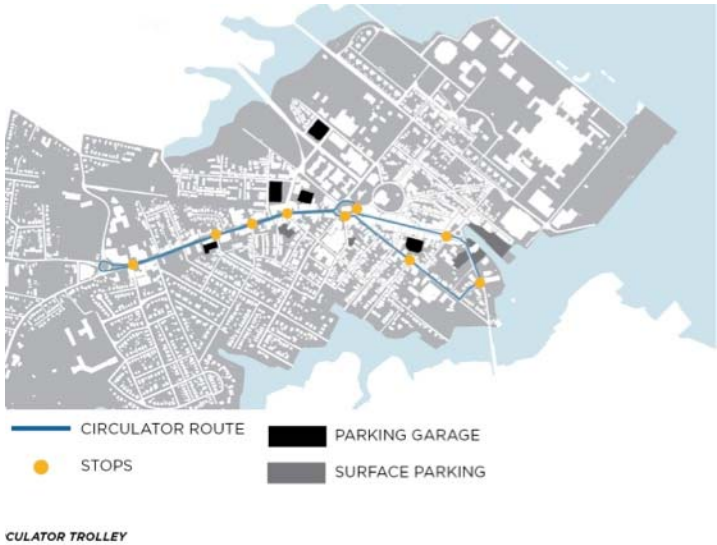
A 15-foot wide sidewalk is proposed along any new building(s) on the former Fawcett’s property. On the opposite side of the street, including along the frontage of the Board of Education property, the Plan recommends installing a planting strip and street trees to buffer pedestrians from cars and provide shade.

A traffic signal may or may not be needed at Compromise and St. Mary’s Streets, but if provided, it would benefit pedestrians who wish to cross Compromise Street but have limited opportunities to do so.



Parking

The main discussion of the Plan’s parking management strategies is set forth in Section IV of this report. The thoughtful management of parking demand and supply is essential to getting the balance right. The City is making strides to reduce long-term parking demand on City Dock in favor of increasing the availability of customer parking. One measure of the success of public private efforts to manage parking on City Dock is the hospitality employee parking program the City recently started. Under the program, employees of downtown restaurants are guaranteed low-cost parking at the Park Place garage and a free Circulator ride to and from City Dock. As the City implements other strategies and adjusts its parking pricing policies, the demand for long-term parking on City Dock will be shifted to public garages. As public improvements are made and the parking management strategies take hold, the number of surface parking spaces would be reduced. Under the plan, eventually and gradually the number of spaces along Dock Street could be reduced from 199 to about 90 while promoting the rate of turnover in parking spaces. Promoting turnover supports local business’ needs for easy customer access. The City-owned Donner Lot would be improved as a public open space and the City-owned Fleet Lot at Newman and Compromise would become part of new building site. Customer storefront parking would remain throughout the study area as shown below, providing retailers on City Dock with about the number of on-street parking spaces one would find in a comparable business district.



Several proposals that support parking management are worth mentioning here. First, the space shown in green in the exhibit below is “flexible” parking. This could be used for valet parking during the heaviest peak demand, increasing the number of cars parked by at least 20 percent. The space could also be used to guarantee parking for disabled persons or it could have a set aside for motorcycles and be a location for electric vehicle charging stations. During special events, this space at the outer reaches of City Dock could be closed off to traffic at the intersection of Dock and Craig Streets. Second, redevelopment would be encouraged on Dock Street and new buildings could have their own internal parking garages to meet the needs of the users of the buildings and any extra space could be made available for general public use. Third, the City should look to secure valet parking on the Board of Education site as another option for long-term parking.



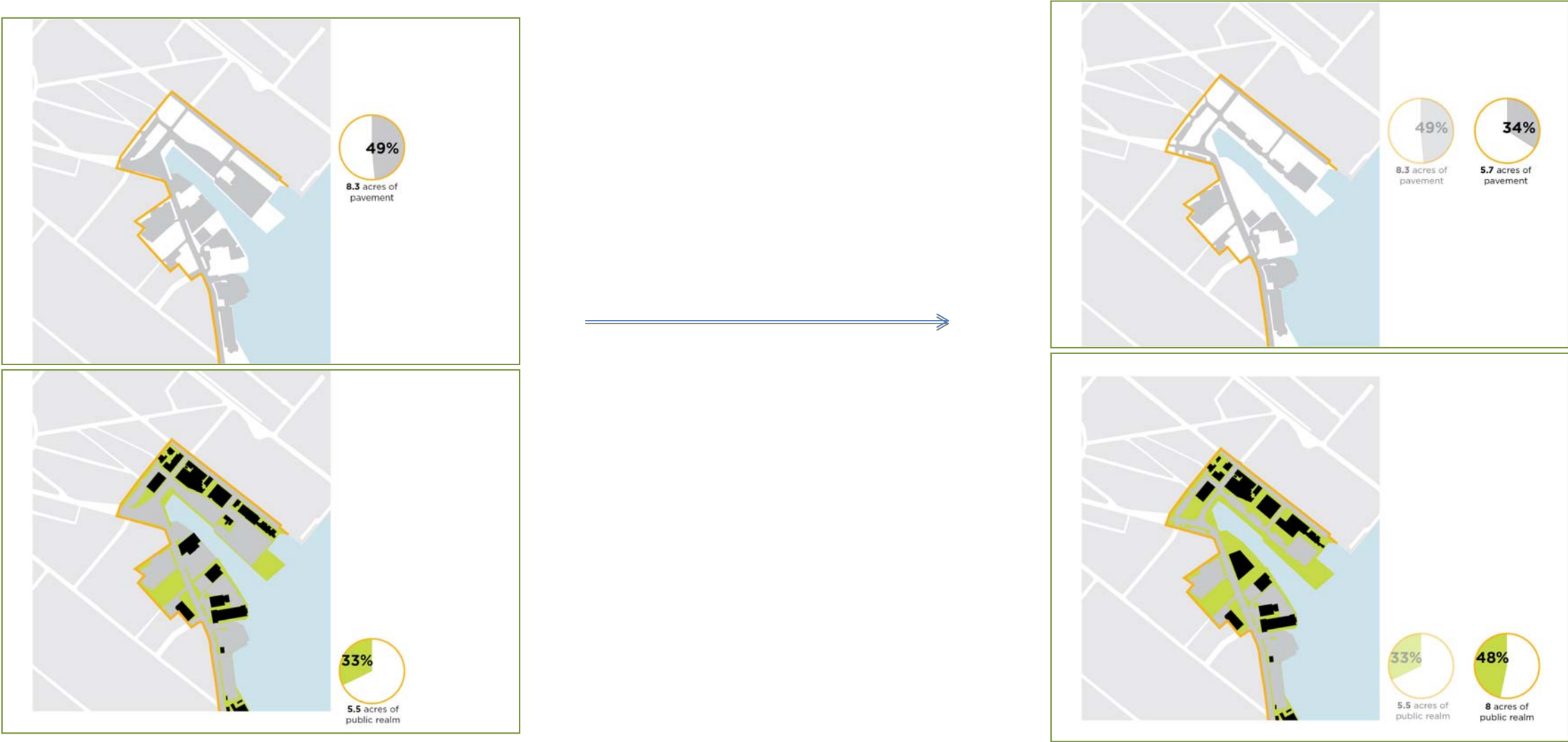
Current



As Proposed

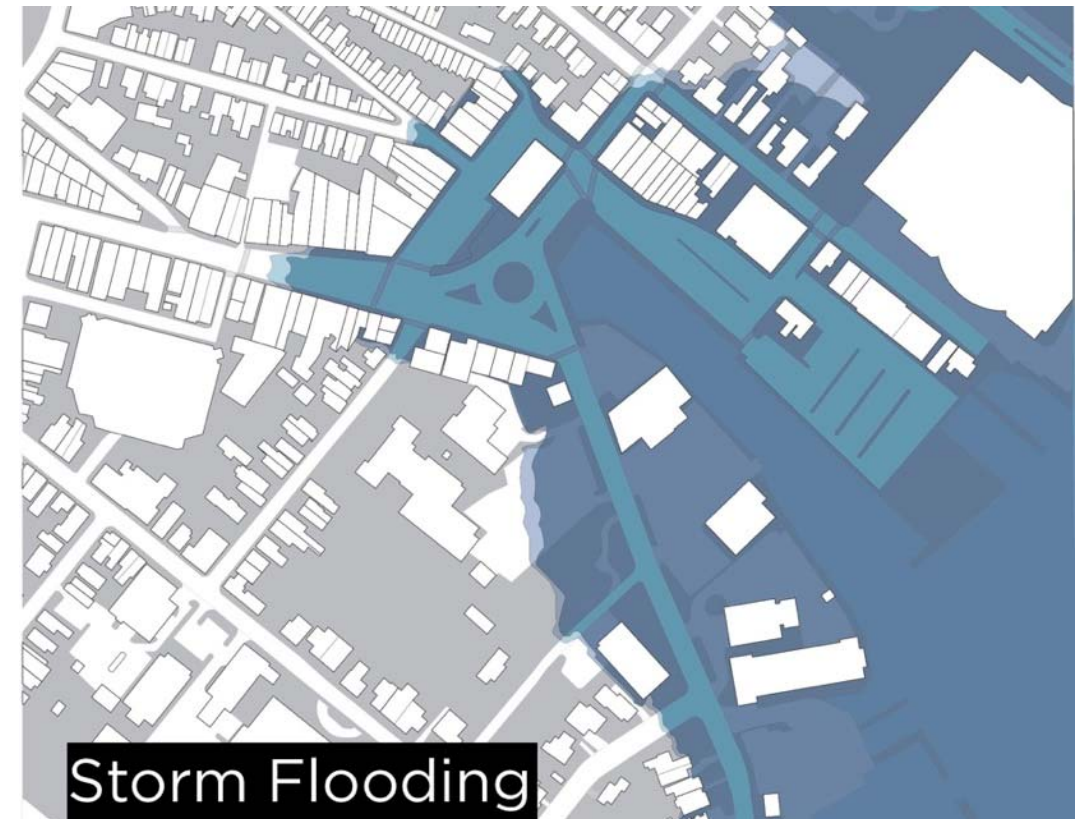
The Transition Quantified

The transition to a more walkable and balanced urban form on City Dock is confirmed by a measurement of surface area devoted to cars and to the public realm in the exhibits on this page. The study area is comprised of 16.8 acres. Today 8.3 acres or 49 percent of the City Dock study area is devoted to streets and parking lots. Upon implementation of the Plan the total would drop to 5.7 acres or 34 percent of the study area. By comparison, the amount of public realm space would increase from 5.5 acres or 33 percent to 8 acres of 48 percent.



D. Greening and Sustainability

A central element of the Plan is flood protection. The City has begun to evaluate steps to mitigate flooding on City Dock. Recurring flooding is caused by tidal fluctuations and relatively low elevations ranging from 2.0 feet to about 4.5 feet around City Dock. Storm drains back up during high tide events and stormwater flows out on onto Compromise and Newman Streets and into low lying areas on City Dock. More serious flooding occurs when there are high tides and storm surges associated with severe weather events. Sea level rise is compounding the problem and a 2011 study titled Flood Mitigation Strategies for the City of Annapolis by Whitney, Baily, Cox & Magnani, LLC, suggests that the occurrence of nuisance or recurring flooding is expected to double over the next 50 years. Conservative projections of sea level rise in the Chesapeake Bay region place the rate of sea level rise at 1.3 feet per century.



Building in Resiliency

The City should begin immediately to engineer the flood mitigation strategies that will address recurring flooding on City Dock. This is a two-part plan. The first step includes installing back-flow preventers on the key drainpipes discharging into Ego Alley. The second step includes tying the drainage system at City Dock together and installing a major pumping station, possibly under the Donner Lot. The pumps would force water that would otherwise overflow from the storm drains out into Ego Alley. These steps would address the flooding that results for tidal and regular rain events and improve the business environment on City Dock. As the streets and other surfaces are rehabilitated following construction, the City should seize opportunities to make serious advances toward public space and pedestrian improvements.

Over the long term however, the historic built environment of City Dock and the City's infrastructure under Dock, Compromise and Randall Streets are threatened by sea level rise. In response, the Plan proposes that a seawall be constructed around the perimeter, as shown below, to protect downtown from storm events at least as severe as the 100-year flood, such as Hurricane Isabel. The goal is to integrate a seawall into the very fabric of City Dock so that it becomes a useable amenity to residents and visitors. It could be sitting wall and contain an elevated planting bed as illustrated below.

The seawall would be adaptable to sea level rise, which is projected to increase the severity and frequency of major storm events. For instance, the 100-year flood, five decades from now, would inundate more of City Dock than Hurricane Isabel did, so that structure must be adaptable. In its basic configuration the seawall could be three feet tall or slightly higher depending on the base elevation of ground. As envisioned though, the flood protection height could be increased as needed through built-in vertical partitions that would be raised in response to impending flood events. There are many spaces in the proposed seawall to allow broad access to the waters edge. These spaces could be equipped with floodgate technologies to allow the seawall to be sealed against flooding. The seawall would tie into a structure on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Academy on the north side of City Dock and tie into an acceptable elevation south of City Dock, likely on the northeast side of Compromise Street near the Spa Creek Bridge.



Green Spaces and Shade

The Plan adds pervious surfaces on City Dock. As mentioned previously, three parks are shown and the Plan's preferred option is that these spaces or substantial parts of these spaces be set aside in lawn and landscaping. They could be part of a comprehensive stormwater management approach that will help prevent the effects of unfiltered runoff into the harbor. The green space at the improved Susan Campbell Park alone would approximate 8,200 square feet. The Plan also provides a continuous planting bed, forming part of the seawall.

Lastly, the Plan introduces more trees to City Dock, located so as not to block views but to offer shade at key locations and soften the building mass at other locations. Temporary shade structures, possibly public art installations, should be considered too.

The Plan supports preserving the Newman Street playground and the green spaces on the Old Recreation Center site.



E. Public Art – Nurturing the Uniqueness of Place

A City can declare what is possible, perhaps best through its public art. Possibility has the power to transform in the here and now; it does not require a long wait. A man once said, “My daughter loves to declare what is possible; she will be a great pianist, she says. And in every moment she fills our house with the sound of her music, her possibility is alive. And so I know, it is her future that shapes her today. She is alive in her possibility.” The same is true for Annapolis when it declares what is possible for City Dock.

The job of public art is to provide for the preservation and interpretation of culture and to reveal the great possibilities of a place. Public art is about engaging people at the level where they can experience, participate in, and create in an ongoing way the heritage of their place. Public art should challenge, inspire, inform, reveal, and celebrate. Public art can be a permanent installation or etched into the very fabric of a place. It can be temporary or ephemeral. It can be performance-based and staged or it can be more spontaneous. It can be informative, interpretative, and evocative. Public art is free to the public, made available to every one. Of course it is not free, though, and funding for public art must be part of the design and construction of improvements on City Dock, with contributions made by both the public and private sectors. This Plan embraces public art as basic to the improvement of City Dock and encourages the City to include a public art component in all capital projects on City Dock.



The Space and Infrastructure for Public Art

The Master Plan envisions new public spaces at key locations connected by enhanced pedestrian ways and to the surroundings by sight lines and views. Since the big ideas have been largely “worked out” in the Master Plan, it would be easy to conclude that public art is simply about what sculpture should be installed within a certain public space, but that would be too narrow a view. Public art, as conceived here, is more than the carving out of a space for a future installation. The spaces themselves, indeed the entirety of City Dock, is the canvas or stage set for public art. As the City moves from this Master Plan stage to more detailed stages of design and building, the spaces and the elements themselves must be seen as public art. For example, the seawall, which is fundamental to protecting the built heritage of City Dock, should have an artistic component. Each of the public spaces, their edges, the seating that surrounds them, the buildings that frame them, and the views contained within them—each element of thoughtful place-making—holds potential. Therefore, artists should be integral members of the design teams that would shape and improve City Dock over the years.

Where public art involves a formal installation, it is essential that architecture and the built and natural environment support that art. Placement is critical. For example, as City Dock adapts to sea level rise and the increasing frequency of flooding, there will be potential to provide prominent space and an improved context for the Kunte Kinte - Alex Haley Memorial sculpture group, compass rose, and story wall. New opportunities for pedestrian circulation and open spaces will be realized under the Master Plan and all improvements must be thoughtfully integrated with these essential existing contributions to the City's public art.

The proposed market square is at an important crossroads, especially for pedestrians. It is a transition zone between historic Main Street and the water and between residences and the waterfront. It is an obvious location for art in many of its forms and the design of this space must embrace this potential. Market square and the Donner Lot are also sized for outdoor performances that can draw 90 to 150 people, which is perfect for year round community based performances. The larger "flexible" parking area near Susan Campbell Park also holds great possibility for artwork, while retaining its necessary functions as flexible parking area, tour bus turnaround, Boat Show exhibiter space, and entry plaza to the Sailing Hall of Fame. Here the space might call for something more ephemeral that could be seen from afar and draw people and boaters to it, that could cast a shadow, shape a view, or light up the evening sky above City Dock. By contrast, the Plan's connecting zone between the Newman Street playground and the water's edge at City Dock provides a great place for the City's children and families and art could reinforce that connection with fixed installations built into the sidewalks, walls, and plazas. The promenade running the length of bulkhead might well tell the story of the Chesapeake's seafood industry, the City's maritime culture, and the watermen of Annapolis.

There are possibilities in the design of key elements on City Dock to advance important ideas and values. City Dock can accelerate the transition to sustainability, for example, by focusing on ecology. A new stormwater system, which could incorporate the green spaces and even the proposed seawall, could tell a story about how civic design itself can improve local water quality. Places can be found along the edges of the bulkhead, perhaps at the foot of Newman Street, for a public oyster-raising program. The pumping station, which would protect City Dock from recurring tidal and stormwater flooding, will be a significant work of civil engineering and therefore might be designed in such a way as to be visible to passersby offering a tangible lesson about resiliency and how things work.

The Plan recommends that the Old Recreation Center at St. Mary's and Compromise Street retain a public or semi-public use. The second floor of the building, the location for the public meetings on this very Plan, holds promise as a dance studio or other performance space. The first floor of the building too could house activities that are central to the culture of Annapolis, whether maritime, artistic, educational, or recreational. Each of the proposed new or redeveloped buildings on City Dock, either at the former Fawcett's site or along outer Dock Street, and the spaces that surround them should enrich the authentic experiences of daily life on City Dock for the Annapolis residents.



The Community of Artists

The Annapolis Art in Public Places Commission would have the lead role in convening and leading a “community of artists” in a thoughtful process of shaping and guiding the selection of art on City Dock. Artistic expression on City Dock should challenge and open the community to appreciating City Dock as a living, breathing place of local culture; a place that is on an arc of continual transition and change. Themes derived from the culture of Annapolis, in all its layers, could help shape the work of the community as it engages in the design of the open spaces. The Art in Public Places Commission as manager of public art on City Dock could be especially instrumental in working with landscape and urban design teams, in commissioning works of art, and in assigning subject area experts to advise and guide the community in the selection of projects, especially of permanent art.

A “community of artists” is a term meant to include any person desiring that an authentic culture of Annapolis be retained on City Dock. The community should be engaged in community-based approaches to decision making about design on City Dock. Bringing art to City Dock especially in its temporary and performance-based forms sooner rather than later can help facilitate this. This Plan envisions that City Dock would immediately become a venue for theater, music, and dance. This Plan is an invitation to the Annapolis theatre companies and the community’s ballet, choral, opera and symphony artists, among other artists and musicians to act now to help the broader Annapolis community shape the possibility for public art on City Dock. The performing arts are a way to enliven public spaces, but in the context of this Master Plan, they are also a way to help reclaim those spaces, for the public in the first place.

III. Strategies that Support the Plan

A. Management Entity on City Dock

The creation of a management entity on City Dock was one of the six principles agreed to by the City Dock Advisory Committee and is therefore listed as the first supporting strategy. This Plan recommends that the Mayor and City Council create by ordinance a City Dock Management District and a Management Authority. The Authority should be run as a public-private organization authorized to raise and expend revenues within a City Dock Management District. A Board of governance should be composed of Annapolis citizens who share a commitment to the broad principles laid out by the City Dock Advisory Committee and are committed to implementing the City Dock Master Plan including representation of businesses on Dock and Market Streets. The Authority should work to promote the economic vitality and revitalization of City Dock.

The responsibilities of the Authority should include managing supplemental upkeep on City Dock. The Authority would not have primary responsibility for maintaining City Dock, which is a function of the City of Annapolis. However some upkeep, such as seasonal planting or clean-up after special events might readily be undertaken by the Authority. Second, the Authority could provide supplemental security of public and/or public-private spaces. Third, the Authority should manage and license events on City Dock. Fourth, the Authority should facilitate the installation of public art and arts programming in the public spaces on City Dock, along with others qualified to decide what public art should go where and when. Fifth, the Authority should have a voice in the management of parking on City Dock, being an advocate for the transition contemplated in this Plan toward parking management and public spaces. Lastly, the Authority should advocate for and educate the public about the City Dock Master Plan in support of its implementation and updating over time.

Possible sources of funding for the Authority, in support of a full time Executive Director and small staff, should include City and County general funds, the sale and lease of city owned properties on City Dock, a portion of Boat Show license fees, mooring and docking fees, license fees for events on City Dock, and approved commercial use or concessions on public spaces. The Authority should also raise revenues through a tax on property located within the District and through contributions, donations, grants and revenues from Authority sponsored special events. If the Authority, acting in concert with the City, were to acquire an interest in the Annapolis Boat Show, annual revenues could accrue to the public for ongoing improvements on City Dock. The full potential of this should be explored in the near term.

B. Parking Management

The Plan's recommended transition to public use, open space, and flood protection, means that there would be fewer surface parking spaces in future years on City Dock. This does not mean however that there would be a reduced availability of customer parking. Parking management would be used to promote turnover of spaces and thereby increase the availability of surface parking. A gradual removal of parking spaces guided by the Plan is recommended in coordination with downtown businesses to address business concerns about the reduction in the number of spaces. Parking management strategies can mitigate a reduction in the number of spaces with the principal aim being to ensure that short term customer parking remains available for the businesses located on City Dock, while directing long-term parking users to other locations. This includes downtown employees and employers, tourists, and other visitors. Parking management uses a market based approach to direct drivers to the parking locations that best meet their needs and it reflects the reality that waterfront real estate is valuable and it can provide many public benefits. As long as the least expensive parking in downtown Annapolis is on City Dock, few spaces will be available for the customers of today's business.

The Parking Plan contains six elements. (1) To professionalize the management of parking, the City would maintain and expand its contracts with the private operator of its parking garages. (2) To reduce the demand for parking on City Dock, the City and area businesses would expand the hospitality employee parking program mentioned earlier to cover more employees. To date about 750 employees have signed up for this program, which will have a measurable impact on the availability of parking. (3) To keep customer parking available the City would deploy performance pricing which incentivizes short-term customer parking on City Dock by charging very little for the first 30 to 45 minutes, but increasingly more for longer stays. (4) To make the most effective use of available surface parking lots during peak periods, the City's contractor would valet park certain lots. Valet intake stands could be set up near the proposed market square and the Donner Lot. (5) To provide low cost options for tourists and visitors, the City would maintain low prices in its garages and the free Circulator. (6) To direct people to the parking that best meets their needs, the City would implement its newly prepared Wayfinding Plan and smart meter technologies including smart phone apps. (7) To expand the capacity of Hillman Garage, the City contractor would valet park the ground level and structure it's pricing to gradually reduce the number of employee parking contracts.

When the City has more information about the timing of plans to reconstruct Hillman, it should develop, in concert with downtown businesses, a strategy to address the anticipated shortfall during reconstruction. The number of parking spaces at Hillman Garage should be expanded through the reconstruction to the extent practicable.



C. Future Land Use

Three recommended categories of land use are shown in the exhibit below as well as the current zoning districts that surround City Dock (C-1, C-1A, and C-2) which are not proposed to change except in the modest way mentioned below.

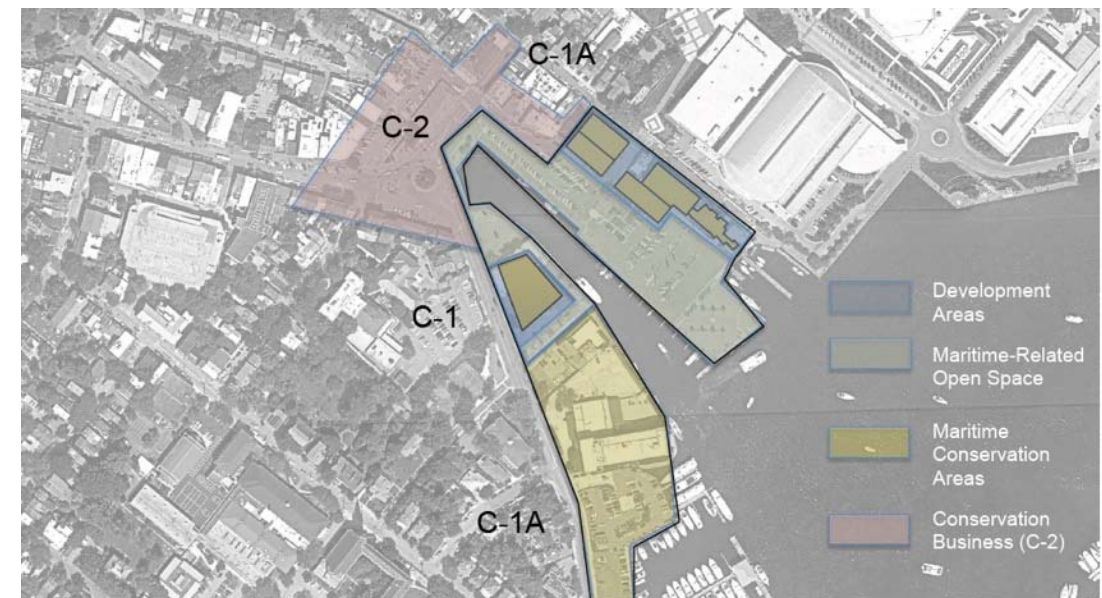
(1) “Development Areas” refers to the redevelopment sites that are supported by this Plan and described previously. The properties along Dock Street are presently zoned C-2 Conservation Commercial. These properties should be rezoned to a more fitting category that promotes high density mixed-use patterns including multi-family residential, and City Dock appropriate commercial uses such as hotels, restaurants, and retail, as well as maritime uses. Non-water related office or other such service uses should not be permitted. The permitted use types should be permitted in this new zone as “by-right” uses, not as special exception uses. Upon redevelopment, the buildings closest to the Sailing Hall of Fame should contain Harbor Master office and space in the building should be dedicated to the functions that serve visiting yachtsmen and recreational boaters. In general, new buildings in the Development Area on Dock Street have good potential for multi-family residential use, or a small hotel, with ground floor restaurants. The former Fawcett’s site has great potential for maritime related commercial uses including retail, specialty foods, and restaurants and should include some ancillary public meeting, gallery, or studio space.

(2) “Maritime-Related Open Space” refers to most of the open area on City Dock, and would include the planned open space improvements. No new buildings should be allowed within this land use zone.

(3) “Maritime Conservation Areas”. These areas should be put to maritime use in the future unless and until they are incorporated into the City Dock Master Plan, through its amendment and extension. This land use zone encompasses the Fleet Reserve and the Marriott Hotel. Should the owners of these properties seek to redevelop in the future for uses other than maritime uses, this Plan will need to be first amended to incorporate them into the City Dock Master Plan complete with the public use improvements such as the promenade.

The uses of land on the west side of Compromise Street shown here as zoned C-1 and C-1A should largely remain unchanged. The Old Recreation Center should be retained in public or semi-public uses such as for educational, artistic, or civic, recreational activities.

The aim of one of the first zoning amendments for City Dock should be a provision that requires the removal of the non-conforming billboard sign on Dock Street after a reasonable amortization period, for instance, five years.



D. Redevelopment

The City must be prepared to promote, respond, adjust and support private redevelopment opportunities that are consistent with the Master Plan and support the Annapolis Beautiful Historic Seaport brand. The redevelopment of the former Fawcett's site and the buildings on outer Dock Street would allow parts of the Plan to advance including the public/private outdoor spaces, the seawall, and promenade. All modern waterfront development proceeds with public-private partnerships; they do not succeed without it. This is in part due to the extent of public ownership of land along the waterfront but also to something more fundamental; the clear, unambiguous, and legitimate public interests at stake in such redevelopment which include interests in safe and accommodating public access to and along the waterfront, interests in the preservation of beautiful and context-defining views from and to the water, interests in architecture and urban design that respects and contributes to historic context, interests in flood protection, stormwater management, and bulkhead stability, interests in the accessibility and safety of docking for recreational, commercial, and emergency watercraft, interests in the viability of major character-defining special events, and interests in the preservation of critical elements of the maritime economy. All of these interests are at stake on City Dock.

Public/private partnerships can help promote market-supportable private redevelopment while achieving the aims of a Master Plan. Such agreements may deal with public sector assistance in the structuring of a sale, lease, or redevelopment agreement. They can also deal with zoning and land use standards and procedures, infrastructure improvements, open space dedications and easements, and land swaps and contributions to financing of redevelopment proposals. Public/private agreements place the public and private sectors on the same side with the goal of realizing the overall vision of the Master Plan.

E. Capital Planning and Phasing

The Master Plan for City Dock could be implemented in 20 years. Implementation of a Master Plan is not linear; it is strategic and depends on funding and the ability to link short-term projects with the longer-term vision. Implementation is an ongoing process that must respond to opportunities. Here are the principles for phasing on the City Dock Master Plan:

- Prioritize mitigating the flooding problem. The first two phases of the work are generally understood already, now the City must move assertively to undertake the necessary engineering and construction.
- Leverage capital investments that have to be made anyway, including for example the repair of the bulkhead. This and related public works will be disruptive and when the spaces are rehabilitated, they should be rebuilt in accord with the Master Plan.
- Use capital funds to leverage grants. Granting seeking is especially relevant for City Dock given the variety of linked public interests at stake.
- Convert parking to public spaces as the parking strategies bear fruit. This requires that the change in use and demand of parking be monitored so that information is available to make informed decisions. The new smart meter technologies that the City will implement in 2013 will allow this.
- Upon initiation of any major work on City Dock, the City should underground the utility lines that run above Dock Street.

F. Traffic Engineering

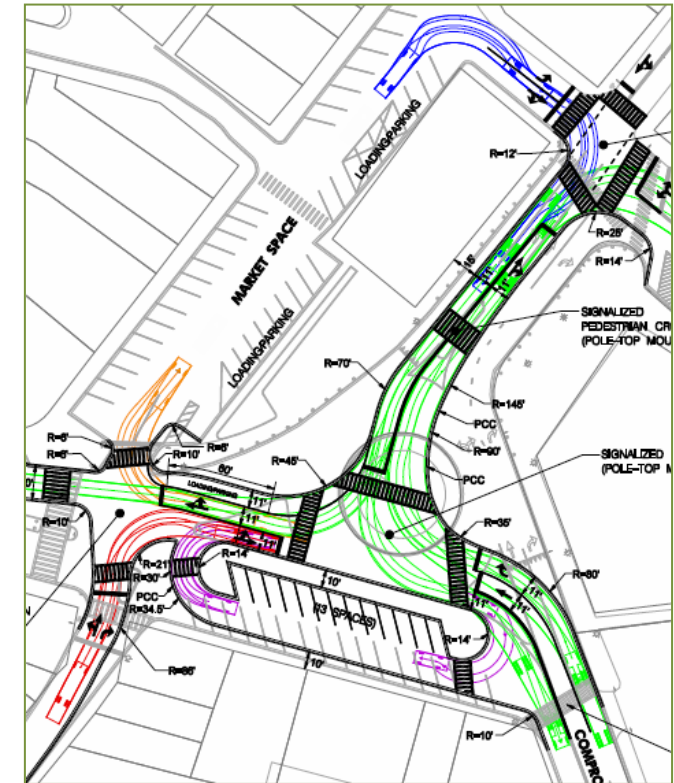
Thoughtful, skilled, and context-sensitive traffic engineering must continue on City Dock as the Plan is moved into various stages of implementation. The City's consulting engineers on this project, Sabra Wang Associates, Inc., evaluated the proposed intersection configurations discussed in this report. The results of their assessment of the "T" intersection, which is featured in the design of the Master Plan, are summarized below. A more detailed analysis, including the evaluation of other options, can be obtained by contacting the City's Planning and Zoning Department.

For the "T" intersection, the traffic control changes, including the removal of the unnecessary signal at Randall and Prince George Streets, would maintain the average automobile travel times to, from, and through City Dock and even reduce travel times during the morning weekday rush and at other non-peak times during the day. With less side street traffic during such times, the signals would be set to favor traffic on Compromise and Randall Streets so that it would flow as efficiently as under existing morning or non-peak conditions. With dynamic signal timing, right turns on red from Compromise Street to Randall Street (and other movements) would be allowed because there are fewer pedestrians.

During the weekday evening peak, an overall average travel time increase of between 10 to 20 seconds would be expected due to signal changes for the side street traffic. In general, drivers, who under current conditions, wait at stop signs to turn, for example, from Dock Street left onto Randall Street, would experience similar or reduced delays while drivers traveling between the Naval Academy and Eastport would experience an increase of about 30 seconds on average. This would be mostly due to the wait for the left turn from Randall Street to Compromise Street.

During peak traffic periods on City Dock, such as Saturday afternoons, delays for auto traffic would be significantly reduced by the proposed "T" intersection, with average delays for trips to, from, and through City Dock reduced by two minutes or more. This would occur primarily due to the regulated control of auto and pedestrian flows. Drivers would be prohibited from turning on a red light and lights would go red nearly simultaneously at each signal to allow all pedestrians at all intersection to move concurrently. A major new pedestrian crosswalk in front of Market House is proposed and it too could be signalized, though this may not be required.

Among the supporting changes, the Plan also recommends reversing the direction of flow on Market Space and installing a signal at the intersection of Randall Street with Dock Street/Market Place. This change allows easier access to Market Space via a right turn from Main Street or a through movement from Green Street. The space currently dedicated to the left turn lane on Randall Street could then be eliminated to narrow the street and provide more public space in front of Market



House. Access to and from Pinkney, Fleet, and Cornhill Streets would be maintained. This could be a first phase of improvements and could be done without changing the current circle. The conversion of Memorial Circle to a “T” intersection along with the other improvements could occur later with the public space improvements.

Achieving the travel time reductions during the Saturday afternoon peaks mentioned above would require discouraging traffic on Green Street from making a two-part turn—that is, right onto Main Street with a quick left onto Randall Street. This could be done in part through signage that direct such trips to City Dock via St. Mary’s Street rather than Green Street and/or by directing Green Street drivers across Main Street to Market Space and from Market Space to Randall Street. The City’s wayfinding improvements, along with the transition to better parking management, and the use of the Circulator would each help with this too and, indeed, would benefit all traffic operations on City Dock during the busy times of the year.

4. Conclusion

The preparation of a Master Plan is at its heart an act of community good will. A good Master Plan aspires to be of service to the public, and in the case of the City Dock Master Plan, to thoughtfully reveal the potential that exists in one of the City’s most prominent places. A 25-member citizen advisory committee, guided by community input, assembled this Plan and it now shares this Plan with the full community. The process followed in preparing this document has given voice to many concerns, arising from many perspectives, that City Dock can and should be improved while always preserving the essence of the Annapolis’ beautiful historic seaport. This document does speak of change and that is undeniable. However, it speaks of gradual change and needed improvements that fit into a unique historic context.

Out of respect for the rich heritage, the merchants that make their living at City Dock, and the many Annapolitans that experience City Dock as a unique place of culture, this Plan should be used as a guide to improvements, not as a final or fixed design. Where possible, the ideas in this Plan should be flexibly ground-tested and evaluated on an ongoing basis. When changes are made, the results should be evaluated, and if and where adjustments to the Plan are called for, those changes should be made. This Plan is also an invitation to all members of the community who would like to see implementation happen sooner rather than later: begin now to shape and improve City Dock through your choices to walk to local businesses, to shop and dine downtown, to program events that speak to area’s unique sense of place, and to gather in the very same places that in the future the City would improve as public spaces. Do this and you will help realize the possibilities that this Plan speaks about.

Appendix

The adopted principles of the City Dock Advisory Committee:

Number One: Improvements should be made gradually and emphasize historic layout and scale, access to the waterfront, sight lines and views. A preservation ethic should be reflected in our treatment of City Dock—through interpretive opportunities, historic walks and markers, and the demarcation of the historic shoreline. Power lines should be buried underground to further enhance vistas. All improvements should reinforce the “Beautiful Historic Seaport” brand and maintain a strong, clear identity.

Number Two: The management of City Dock should be coordinated year-round. The purview of the management entity should include the programming of public space, ensuring trash pick-up and cleanliness, reducing clutter, monitoring the progress of implementing visions for City Dock, collecting data, incorporating feedback, coordinating marketing, and supervising Market House operations. This management should support local businesses as well and help them to thrive. Furthermore, the management should advocate for City Dock and protect the historic core.

Number Three: A central organizing feature of improvements should be high quality pedestrian-oriented and walkable public open space that is flexible enough to support a variety of uses in a variety of seasons and under a variety of conditions (such as accommodating sea level rise). This could include a continuous promenade along the water from the Marriott Hotel to the site of the future Sailing Hall of Fame, more seating and benches, and shelter from the elements. There should be many destinations to attract people to different parts of City Dock.

Number Four: Improvements should support a greater *mix* of transportation modes (bikes, shuttles, water taxis, and public transit) that complement and enhance one another. There should be an emphasis on expanding off-street capacity and maximizing the use of garages. Highly visible and adequate signage and “smart” technologies such as flexible price parking based on demand, should be utilized to “catch” vehicles with an effective progression of directions and signage. There should be an efficient and uniform pay system for on-street parking. There should be creative and experimental ways to accommodate both parking and people that can be also be reversible.

Number Five: City Dock improvements should contribute to the City’s “greening” and the area should serve as a sustainable focus for an authentic residential life. There should be an intersection of resources such as farmers markets and other local vendors with opportunities to celebrate Chesapeake Bay heritage and have meaningful and organic interactions with the water and the environment. Improvements should contribute to the economic vitality of the area.

Number Six: Public art opportunities and installations can enhance City Dock and provide both thought-provoking and entertaining experiences. The art can be permanent or ephemeral, suited to the season or a particular event. Art can help strengthen the “Beautiful Historic Seaport” brand, move pedestrians through new public open space, and inspire creative exchanges with the water.